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THE TWO CROSSES OF HONOUR.

AMONGST the Orders and Crosses bestowed as symbols of merit, the Legion of Honour and the Victoria Cross hold the foremost place, and their true nature is worthy of being popularly known. The Legion is not quite so exclusive an Order as the Victoria Cross; for it is not confined to deeds of valour, but is bestowed upon all, soldiers, sailors, and civilians alike, for all kinds of service to the state—military, naval, political, or scientific. It is much respected by the French people, who eagerly and persistently seek for the honours which the wearing of the 'red ribbon' confers on its possessor. The Legion of Honour was founded in 1802 by Napoleon Bonaparte when First Consul, for the express purpose of rewarding all civil and military merit; and it superseded all the monarchical orders, which had been abolished by the Revolution. Napoleon intended at first that the Legion should have a white ribbon as the emblem of purity; but this being the colour of the Bourbons, red was chosen instead, although this was already worn by the Knights of St Louis.

The Order acquired great lustre during the reign of Napoleon I.; for at the period of his captivity and final exile, six thousand Frenchmen had acquired it, and out of this large number five thousand had received the distinction for bravery on the field of battle, the honour being enhanced in many cases by the fact that the great Emperor often conferred the insignia with his own hand on the spot, immediately after the deed was done which had earned the honour; at times even taking the golden cross from his own breast to place it on that of a common soldier. On the restoration of the Bourbons, the old monarchical Orders were revived; but the Legion of Honour had so entirely supplanted them in the affection of the people at large, that it was deemed prudent to continue it as the chief national reward for services rendered to the state. In such esteem was it held at this period that sentries were obliged to present arms to all bearers of the celebrated red ribbon; and

this compliment was paid to the members of the Legion up to the year 1824, when the number of 'legionaries' having increased to twenty-eight thousand, it was found that the work of saluting was growing very onerous for the sentries—that in fact there was too much 'saluting' going on—and the somewhat absurd system was suddenly discontinued.

Louis-Philippe, the 'Citizen' king, abolished the old Orders, and retained only the Legion, and this he distributed so indiscriminately as to raise the number of members in a very short time to more than fifty thousand. After his flight from Paris, the Order was suppressed by the Republican government; but was revived by Napoleon III., under whose *régime* it became the vehicle for bribery and corruption of the most flagrant kind. Though endowed with a new set of rules, ostensibly to purify it, the Legion was used to decorate men of the most questionable character; and any political service rendered to the Emperor or his ministers was, apart from its nature, almost certain to be rewarded by the bestowal of the famous red ribbon. It was never more fairly bestowed however, than when it graced the breasts of the bronzed heroes of the Crimean War; and so long as the Order was kept for purely military purposes, its value and character were beyond question. The French greatly esteem it, as shewn by the fact that the late President of the Republic, M. Thiers, who during his term of office never wore any uniform whatever, always bore in the button-hole of his plain frock-coat the red ribbon of the Legion—the only Order which he chose to wear from among many others in his possession. It is now the highest honour which it is in the power of the President and his ministers to bestow; and its value is enhanced by the fact that every member of the Order is entitled to appear at court ceremonies, and at his death to have military honours paid to his remains. It is eagerly sought after by all Frenchmen, and when obtained, is proudly and ostentatiously worn.

The majority of the members are Chevaliers or Knights; and next above them in rank come the

Officers, the Commanders, then the Grand Officers, and highest of all, the Grand Crosses. Civilians on whom the Order is conferred have to pay certain fees for the privilege; but in the case of soldiers or sailors it carries with it a pension, varying between ten pounds for Knights, and two hundred pounds for Grand Crosses. The Knight's insignia of the famous Order are a red ribbon at the button-hole when in plain clothes, and a silver-mounted enamelled cross when in uniform. The Officer has a red rosette when out of, and a gold-mounted enamelled cross when in, uniform; the rosette being worn also by all the members of the superior grades when in morning-dress. In evening-dress or uniform, the Commanders wear a red collar with a cross pendent; the Officers a star on the left breast in addition to the collar; and the Grand Crosses a larger star, and a broad red ribbon or sash across the breast.

Officers of the army or navy receive the Cross of the Legion of Honour by right after twenty years' good service; but the private soldier or sailor is compelled to win it by distinguished conduct in the field, and often deserves it over and over again before he succeeds in obtaining the much-coveted honour. Civil servants, prefects, procurators, &c. also get the Order after a certain term of service as such; but authors, artists, poets, inventors, engineers, and others have to knock long and loudly at the official door before their claim to the decoration is allowed. None but persons of irreproachable character—that is, those who have never stood as criminals at the bar of a court of justice—are admitted to the companionship of the Legion; and it is therefore looked upon everywhere and by everybody in France as a certificate of or testimonial to honesty and merit.

It is stated that the Commissioners of the Paris Exhibition having been intrusted by the government with the bestowal, upon persons who had rendered services in connection with the great International Show, of three hundred Crosses of the Legion of Honour, no less than twenty-two thousand applications for the honour were received! Certainly, the Order could not be better bestowed than in rewarding those who have fought in the great battle of the Arts and Sciences, and thus done their utmost to promote peace and good-fellowship among the nations. But it is somewhat strange that the great Cross which was the guiding star that led Napoleon's famous troops to so many victories, should have developed into a prize-medal for successful traders or a guerdon for political adventurers. There, certainly, is a decline, which if not stopped, will work its own cure, by rendering the decoration valueless.

At Austerlitz, Napoleon bestowed the Cross from his own breast on a grenadier of the Imperial Guard who had saved the Emperor's life when he was fired at by a Russian sergeant of the line. The veteran dashed out of the ranks—in itself an offence against discipline which on ordinary occasions neither Napoleon nor Wellington would forgive—and with his musket struck up that of the Russian, whose shot was thus diverted from its object, only however, to find another victim in the shape of one of the Emperor's suite. The old grenadier then despatched his enemy, and gallantly and successfully defended himself against a horseman and two other infantrymen who sought

to avenge their comrade. Napoleon was a witness of the faithful Guardsman's act; and riding up to him as the latter rejoined his company, he detached from his own breast the golden Cross which glittered there, and pinned it upon that of the veteran. Shouts of 'Vive l'Empereur!' rang through the air from the ranks of the Old Guard, every member of which accepted the decoration of their comrade as a compliment paid to the regiment itself.

So much for the great French Cross. And now we will briefly recount the story of one which is as dear to the hearts of Englishmen—though in a quieter way—as the Legion of Honour is to our neighbours across the Channel—namely the Victoria Cross. This is a purely military and naval distinction, and is only conferred for gallant conduct in the field or in action at sea. Englishmen as a rule do not care much for Orders and Crosses, and the few which are in the gift of the sovereign as the fountain of all honour—namely the Garter, the Thistle, the Bath, the St Michael and St George, and the Star of India—are generally reserved for persons of high rank in the social or official scale who have rendered great services to the state in various capacities. Perhaps the nearest approach to the Legion of Honour on this side of the Channel is the Order of the Bath, which is conferred upon all classes as a general distinction, and for long and zealous service in the cause of the state or in any particular profession.

The Victoria Cross was founded in the year 1855, the period of the Crimean War, and was instituted as a special military and naval distinction for distinguished conduct in the field. It consists of a plain unpretentious piece of bronze-metal in the shape of a Maltese Cross, and is manufactured from guns which have been taken from the enemy. On the front of it is the figure of a lion above a scroll, which bears the simple and appropriate motto—'For Valour'; and on the reverse are inscribed the name of the recipient and the date of the deed of bravery for which it has been conferred. On the top of the cross is a crown and the initial letter V, through which passes the ribbon by which it is suspended. The Cross is conferred on all ranks alike in the army and navy, and when worn, is distinguished by a red ribbon for the army, and a blue one for the navy. It also carries with it a pension, varying from ten pounds for a private to one hundred pounds for an officer. Apart from this, there is no distinction whatever; and its bestowal on a drummer or private as well as on an officer is duly announced in the Gazette, accompanied by a full recital of the brave deed which has won it, and giving its possessor the right, if he chooses to exercise it, of placing the letters V. C. after his name. In the case of officers, this last-named privilege is taken full advantage of; but the privates or drummers have never, as far as we are aware, attached these honourable initials to their names. Perhaps this is because their superior officers have never encouraged them to do so, and the modest fellows—for the truly brave are ever modest—have never had the moral courage to assert their right in this respect.

The Victoria Cross is very sparingly bestowed, and its value is enhanced by the fact that it can only be obtained by a genuine act of bravery

performed in the presence of others and certified by the hero's commanding officer. The recommendation is then forwarded through the general commanding to the Secretary-at-War, who in his turn submits it to the Queen. Though conferred on officers as well as the rank and file, it is essentially a soldier's distinction; and the majority of the members of this most honourable of all military Orders consists of non-commissioned officers, drummers, and privates. It reflects great honour on the drummers of the British army that so many of their comrades have gained the Victoria Cross; the records of the Crimean, Indian Mutiny, and other later wars containing splendid deeds of bravery and devotion performed by the holders of this once despised rank. This is the more to be admired, as the bugler or drummer has very few chances of distinguishing himself; but when an opportunity does occur he is never remiss. It was a drummer who helped to fasten the powder-bags on the gates of Delhi, the destruction of which resulted in the capture of the mutinous city of the Great Moguls in 1857. The act was performed amid a perfect shower of shot and shell, and was rewarded—some months afterwards—with the Victoria Cross. It was also a drummer who, while acting as field-bugler to Lord Napier of Magdala in the Abyssinian War, left the general's side, and dashed first into the stronghold of the tyrant Theodore.

Perhaps the most daring deed that ever won old England's Legion of Honour was that which was successfully performed by Kavanagh during the Indian Mutiny. Lucknow was besieged, and its garrison was starving. Besides the little band of devoted men, there were also women and children cooped up in the Residency, at the mercy of some fifty or sixty thousand savage and relentless foes. Daily, nay hourly, the little garrison was growing weaker and weaker, and nearer and nearer were pressing the dusky sepoys, until it became a matter of life and death to the heroic few that Sir Colin Campbell, who was known to be advancing to their relief, should be at once informed of their real state and their utter inability to hold out much longer. A volunteer was called for, a man who would consent to be disguised as a sepoy, and who would risk his life among the mutineers, in order to make the best of his way to the advancing army. The call was immediately responded to—as it generally is by Britons in the moment of supreme danger—and two or three men expressed their willingness to undertake the task.

From these brave volunteers, an Irishman named Kavanagh was chosen, who, to his other various qualifications, added a knowledge of the enemy's customs and a thorough acquaintance with their language. The Commandant shook the brave man by the hand, and frankly informed him of the dangerous nature of the task he had undertaken; how it was more than probable that he might meet his death in the attempt. But the gallant fellow persisted; and his skin was at once coloured by means of burnt cork and other materials to the necessary hue. He was then dressed in the regular outfit of a sepoy soldier. When night set in, he started on his lonely and perilous mission, amid the hearty 'God-speeds' of the famishing garrison. In his breast he carried despatches for Sir Colin Campbell, with the con-

tents of which he had been made acquainted, in case of their loss.

We have not the space at our command to give all the particulars of his remarkable journey. He succeeded however, after many narrow escapes and great hardships—during which he often had to pass night after night in the detested enemy's camp, and to march shoulder to shoulder with them in the daytime; and when he left them, to swim across rivers, or to crawl through the tangled thickets where the deadly tiger asserts his sway—in reaching Sir Colin Campbell's camp; where, to finish his stirring adventures, he was fired at and nearly shot by the British outposts. Kavanagh's narrative was listened to with rapt attention by Sir Colin, who immediately gave orders for the army to advance as quickly as possible to the aid of the gallant defenders of the Residency. How the latter were rescued is a matter of history. Kavanagh lived long enough to wear his Cross, though he lost his life shortly afterwards in battle with the same enemy; but the noble example he left behind him was not lost on the brave hearts who eventually saved India for England.

In concluding our article, we wish to give expression to the feeling of satisfaction with which we, in common we believe with all Englishmen, have heard that the Queen has bestowed upon certain officers and men England's Cross of Honour; amongst other deserving officers and men, to Lieutenants—now Majors—Chard and Bromhead, of South African fame. Their noble deed—how, with about a hundred men, they covered the retreat of an army, and saved a whole colony from ruin and devastation—is fresh in the public mind, and needs no recapitulation. It will ever live in history as an exploit *unique* in military annals, and will shed a bright light over a period of dread and unparalleled disaster.

Such then is the story of these two famous Crosses; but whole volumes could be filled with the glorious deeds of those whose breasts have borne or are now bearing the honourable insignia. Though somewhat dissimilar in the manner in which they are now conferred, yet both carry out the intentions of their founders by keeping alive within the hearts of the people that spirit of chivalry and honour which is the real strength of a nation.

YOUNG LORD PENRITH.

CHAPTER XXXIX.—COME TO HAUNT ME.

'PUSH, men, with a will! All together, now. And you, Barker, lock the wheels of that van, to stop its slipping down as fast as we get it up. One more try at it, and the thing is done.' It was Hugh who spoke, and he was just then busily engaged in superintending the removal—technically called shunting—into a siding of a number of empty cattle-vans and horse-boxes with which, in anticipation of Bullbury horse-fair, the wisdom of the goods-manager had encumbered the small station of Hollow Oak. There was very little accommodation there in the shape of sidings unoccupied; and since it was necessary to clear the rails on the 'down' side, this superfluous rolling-

stock was, by Hugh's orders, forced up the steep incline of the only available siding, and the brakes put hard on.

'That's very dangerous, Edmunds,' remarked Hugh, as the empty vans were at length disposed of.

'It is, sir,' replied the shrewd head-porter. 'No siding ought to be so steep; and a trifle would bring the whole lot of wagons down again, just, mayhap, as a train was passing. But we haven't time to think of that now. My lord's going up to London by the 12.17 to-day. Word's been brought from the Hall.'

Hugh reddened, and then looked very stern and cold. 'What will Lord Penrith require?' he said, not in his usual pleasant voice. 'There is sure to be room in the train. I suppose he has only one carriage, so you can get a truck in readiness to convey that one.' And then he walked away, leaving Edmunds, who had been used to see the lord of Alfringham received with almost royal honours, sorely puzzled.

In due course Lord Penrith's carriage came down the road that led to Alfringham, and drew up at the station door amidst much lifting of caps and touching of hats. Within it were the old lord, propped up with cushions; his sister Mrs Stanhope, and his niece.

'Train not in?' said Lord Penrith querulously. 'Then I'll go into the waiting-room. I won't stay here, to be chilled to the marrow. I will go into the waiting-room, while you attend to the carriage.'

The train, technically known as the 12.17 on the 'up' line, was not very punctual that day. The hands of the clock crawled on around the dial-plate. It was 12.30, then 12.40, and still no train. The subordinates at the station looked out impatiently for a distant puff of white smoke, listened eagerly for the sound of a steam-whistle. The train 12.17 was provokingly behind time, and with 'my lord' waiting for it.

'Most shameful misconduct! Where is the station-master?' demanded Lord Penrith. Edmunds replied diplomatically, that the station-master was at that moment busy. He did not comprehend Hugh's conduct in keeping aloof, any more than did the noble master of Alfringham, who, like many another magnate, was accustomed to be treated with deference by all with whom he came in contact. How could Edmunds guess that, as the party from the Hall alighted, Hugh had got one glimpse of Maud's unforgotten beauty, and had then withdrawn beyond reach of recognition? He had his own reasons for not desiring to be presented to Mrs Stanhope and Lord Penrith as the fisherman who had saved Maud's life, at the risk of his own, when the pleasure-boat was lost on Bala Lake.

Presently—it was a good while first—the train that should have been there at 12.17 hove in sight. 'Yes; we're a goodish bit overtime—rails were slippery, and clogged in places with the snow,' said the guard, leaping from his van. 'But now we'll catch up lost time. Won't we, Jem?' Part of which confident speech was addressed to Hugh as station-master, and part to the engine-driver.

'We'll try, anyhow,' said that grimy and resolute person, as he stamped his feet on the footboard to warm them.

'You had better be quick then about that carriage. Surely the express is not far behind you?' said Hugh.

'Never you fear, Commodore,' returned the guard with a grin, as he hustled towards where Lord Penrith's carriage was being wheeled upon a truck; 'I'm too old a railway bird to be caught napping. Express hadn't been telegraphed when we passed Stedham,' he added jubilantly. 'Expect it's the state of the rails.'

Hugh, less confident, glanced towards the signal-box; but no warning sign from the semaphore told of the approach of the express, which passed Hollow Oak without stopping. Meanwhile Lord Penrith, by the exertions of his valet and footman, had been placed securely in a corner of a first-class carriage, amidst pillows, cushions, and all the paraphernalia with which a wealthy invalid sets off on a journey. Maud and her mother had also taken their seats. The doors were closed.

'Go ahead, Jem!' called out the cheery guard, when at that moment Hugh, looking over his shoulder, saw the danger-signal, all too late, hoisted at the entrance of the deep cutting, and saw the swift express, unannounced, come thundering along the rails at a speed that nothing could resist.

There had been negligence somewhere—that was certain; there always is when a railway accident occurs; and it is invariably a task from which Minos would have shrunk to apportion the blame so as to make censure and punishment fall on those who really deserve it. Station-masters and signalmen, telegraph clerks, guards, and drivers, had very likely each and all contributed their quota of blundering or indolence to the misconduct that threatened to end tragically enough. But the danger was so near and so dreadful that the thought of it swallowed up all other thoughts. Others besides Hugh Ashton saw the swift express come rushing through the gorge between the deep banks of the cutting, a torrent of wood and iron on its headlong way. There was a cry of horror, another, and then a loud shout, and an uplifting of arms; and Edmunds, with more presence of mind than the rest, snatched up a red flag, and waved it, to attract the attention of the driver of the coming train.

Alas! it was all too late. This was no case for puny remedies, such as shouts and gesticulation and the waving of flags. A train going at such furious speed as the express cannot be stopped like a horse flung back upon his haunches by the pressure of a powerful bit, in a moment. Those in charge of the express train had taken the alarm; but it was little that they could do. The driver had tried to reverse his engine. The guards were not idle. The spectators on the platform could hear the harsh rasping sound of the brakes, as, with a sort of stony-eyed horror akin to the dread fascination with which some fluttering bird gazes on the cold, gleaming eyes of the rattlesnake, they watched the onward rush of the rapid train.

There was no hope that the tardy train of 12.17, hardly in motion, and gliding with a scarcely perceptible movement along the platform, should avoid a fatal collision with the swift pursuer now so near. No hope save in the courage and the readiness of one man—and that man Hugh

Ashton. The presence of mind which he had shewn many a time in the face of danger, stood him in good stead now. Hardly had he seen the coming peril before the only means of averting it flashed, like a heaven-sent thought, upon his mind. Those wagons and vans in the steep siding—mere lumber an hour ago—now afforded the only available means of averting the catastrophe that was so imminent. Without an instant's hesitation he dashed across the line, undid the brakes of the foremost waggons, and with desperate strength set the whole array of horse-boxes and cattle-vans in motion. Down they came with a rattle and clang that was heard even above the thunder of the advancing express, and with the impetus of the descent added to their own weight, rushed clear across the lines, blocking the railway from bank to bank. It was all that Hugh could do to escape from being crushed beneath their weight as they brushed him by; but the deed was done, and a score of empty wagons and horse-boxes were interposed between the two passenger trains.

Then came the crash! No earthly power could have prevented the express from running into the empty rolling-stock in its path, with a rending and a splintering of iron and wood, and a cloud of dust and fragments, and from tearing its way through the impediment with a force that brought the wreck of the cattle-vans into sharp collision with the ordinary train ahead. But the violence of the first blow had been spent, happily, on horse-boxes and wagons, and the accident was not the terrible one that it had threatened to be. A carriage or two of the 12.17 train were wrecked utterly; all had panels and windows the worse; but of the passengers and railway servants there not a life, thanks to Hugh's boldness and forethought, was lost. There were bruises and contusions in plenty; some bones may have been broken; but such injuries passed almost unheeded in the general joy and thankfulness. Not a life lost! Thank God for that! And forget not the brave man who risked his own to save others!

What a cheer it was that greeted Hugh Ashton when, breathless and bareheaded, he made his way back to the opposite side of the line, where already a crowd, such a crowd as the village could supply, was gathering to lend help to the passengers in the broken train. There were men who asked it as a favour to be allowed to shake his hand. There were mothers who as they clasped their children to their hearts addressed him as the preserver of their own lives and the lives of their dear ones, and prayed God to bless him! But the passengers of the express were not fortunate enough to escape more serious accident, since the force of the collision, checked as it had been by the strenuous efforts of engineer and brakemen, had still been sufficient to convert the two leading carriages into a shapeless mass of wreck, and two of their occupants were killed, and thrice as many maimed and wounded.

In the midst of this excitement, Edmunds came suddenly up and laid his hand on Hugh's sleeve. 'My lord's hurt, I'm afraid—Lord Penrith, you know, sir,' said the head-porter; and Hugh turned to see the old lord, supported by his servants, who were removing him from the carriage in which he had been seated. Beside him were Mrs Stanhope, who had fainted, but seemed uninjured;

and Maud, who, unhurt, was bending over her mother.

'Is Lord Penrith wounded?' asked Hugh, and at the sound of his voice Miss Stanhope started and looked up. Her eyes and those of the young man met. Maud was very pale; she grew paler still, and it seemed as though she would have fallen, had not Hugh Ashton passed his strong arm around her and held her up. 'My darling!' he exclaimed, reckless, in that moment, of all studied reticence, all worldly barriers that rank and fortune interpose between loving hearts. 'My darling Maud!'

And Maud looked up, a timid wonder in her beautiful eyes mingling with a truthful admiration that enhanced her loveliness. 'I was frightened,' she said, in a low voice. 'I did not know you were here. I always feel so safe when you are near me.'

Simple words these, and such as the terror and agony of the moment might excuse; but Maud for the moment neither resented Hugh's daring speech nor attempted to free herself from the clasp of the arm that supported her.

'Mr Ashton, our station-master, saved your lives, yes, of all of you, Miss, begging pardon for speaking so free,' said Edmunds, still under the influence of the exciting scene.

'Is it *your* praise that I hear on all sides? Must I thank you again for my life, that you saved before? It is so like you!' murmured Maud; and never had music been so sweet in Hugh's ears as the sound of that low voice; but in the next moment Miss Stanhope, blushing, extricated herself from his hold, and said to her mother, now recovered from her faintness, and who was kneeling at the old lord's side: 'I fear he is very ill, my poor uncle—he has not spoken since the shock. A doctor!'

At this instant Lord Penrith, who had seemed insensible, opened his eyes, and moaned feebly, looking first at his sister, and then at Maud, with evident recognition.

'What is it? Ah! I remember. Yes, I am hurt,' muttered the old man; and then his restless eyes met those of Hugh, who was bending over him. Instantly Lord Penrith's pallid face assumed a look of horror and dismay. 'Go, go!' he said, shuddering. 'Why has he come here, to haunt me at the last!' And then his eyes closed, and Mrs Stanhope shrieked, for she thought him dead.

'He is not dead, but severely hurt, I fear,' was Dr Bland's verdict, when, five minutes later, he arrived at the station. 'It will be better to send his lordship up to Alfringham at once, whilst I look after some of the other wounded passengers who are sadly in need of aid. And I should advise that medical assistance—the most eminent—be summoned by telegraph from London. Say, Mr Blades, my old principal, and of course Sir Joseph Doublefee, and any other leading man. No time, in such a case, should be lost.'

As Lord Penrith was placed in his carriage, which fortunately was not much the worse for the shock of the collision, for removal to his stately home, he spoke again, and twice, after he had reached Alfringham and been laid in his bed, surrounded by every care and luxury available to the ailing rich, he repeated, monotonously, the same words: 'Come to haunt me!'

'He must be wandering in his thoughts, from the effects of the blow. Poor Marmaduke!' said Miss Stanhope. And before night, the great London doctors, called down by telegraph, arrived at the bedside of their noble patient. But the medical town mice could but confirm the dictum of their colleague the country mouse.

'Severe internal injury,' said Sir Joseph and Mr Blades, M.R.C.S., but they said it very gravely; and they added that his lordship could not be in more careful hands than those of Dr Bland.

It was long that night ere Maud could compose herself to sleep, so vividly did she recall, with strangely mingled sensations of shame, and what was almost pleasure, Hugh's words and looks, and the pressure of his encircling arm, at Hollow Oak Station. Something had suddenly awakened in her feelings towards Hugh Ashton as yet unsuspected; and she felt, with a sort of half-terror, that all unconsciously to herself, her heart, from the very first must have been drawn, as by a resistless force, towards Hugh.

AMERICAN FOOD-SUPPLIES.

ONE of the conspicuous phenomena of the age is the inability of the British Islands to supply sufficient food for the teeming population, and the corresponding necessity for procuring supplies from abroad. The principles of free-trade have beneficently permitted all the needful importations. The world at large pours its superfluity into the United Kingdom. Food of every kind is cheap and abundant. There seems no end to the good that is done to buyers as well as to sellers. In the great competition for securing the trade of supply, a first place has been gained by the United States, which is only what might be expected from the boundless expanse of that country and the enterprise of its inhabitants.

At one period in its history our chief importation of food-material from the United States to this country was flour; at all events, flour was one of our earliest importations, as we read of large quantities of it being brought to England at the close of last century for the relief of people suffering from famine; and generally, throughout the 'dear years,' American bread-stuffs came into notice. It was not, however, till after the Atlantic had become a highway for the powerful steam-boats which now traverse it, that our grain-trade with America assumed its present dimensions; and now the Americans, while making flour for themselves and for all the world besides, have set up upwards of twenty-five thousand flour-mills, capable of turning out at present over fifty million barrels per annum.

In Ohio the annual wheat-crop averages twenty-two million bushels per annum. Last year the crop reached thirty million bushels, while in Texas four hundred and fifty thousand acres of land are devoted to the growth of wheat. Farming in America, and especially in California, has of late assumed proportions, and is carried on in a way totally different from anything known in Great Britain. Our old-world

farmers still do in most things as their fathers did before them; growing in particular a variety of crops on their farms, and doing by the aid of hired servants all the necessary work; ploughing, seeding, and reaping; stacking and thrashing their wheat; milking their cows and making their butter; sending what they prepare, as soon as it is prepared, to market. But in our farm across the Atlantic, business is managed in a different way. A speculative American farmer of the modern school considers it unnecessary to divide his allotment into fields on which to grow different kinds of grain. He puts all his eggs, so to speak, in one basket, and makes a big venture for the favours of Fortune by growing only one article, such as cattle, wheat, or Indian corn. In saying this, we are not of course including thousands of struggling agriculturists of the old school whose farms are dotted over the vast American continent; we are alluding to the new order of things promoted by the new men who have arisen; to the 'Corn Kings of California' and the 'Cattle Kings of Indiana,' men whose oxen are numbered by tens of thousands, and whose fields of wheat are measured in miles; likewise to the great dairy-farmers who turn out their makes of butter and cheese by tons.

An English or Scottish farmer would be astonished could he see a stretch of wheat extending for miles in length: a field in which a good day's work is for a team of oxen to make one furrow, and where ploughing on a gigantic system must be had recourse to. Such extensive fields are only to be found on our 'Farm across the Atlantic.' Stay-at-home farmers will be still more astonished perhaps to know, that in most instances the person speculating takes no trouble whatever about the preparation of his ground or about the sowing or reaping of the crop; nor does he interfere in any way whatever. He simply puts himself forward as a speculator in the matter, and is prepared to stand the 'hazard of the die.' His crop may be blighted, or it may bring him a fortune; but whatever may happen, the farming of the land gives him no personal trouble. He keeps no army of ploughmen, no stud of work-horses. He simply contracts with people who make it their business to provide the requisite labour for cultivation, and devote to it their own personal supervision; such persons are amply provided with the appropriate machinery, and the necessary army of labourers; they find the seed and sow it; they reap the harvest and thrash out the grain; they winnow the corn, pack it in sacks, and transport it to the place whence it is to be transported to the market at home or abroad.

Hundreds of thousands of bushels of wheat or other grain are thus dealt with every year. A field of one thousand acres we shall say, will yield twenty thousand bushels; twenty bushels an acre being no uncommon yield in the wheat-fields of America. Thirty, forty, and even fifty bushels have been obtained with deep ploughing and a little

care in the manipulation of the seed. At a profit of one shilling per bushel, the wheat-field specified should yield a return of one thousand pounds sterling. In the state of Oregon splendid crops of fine wheat are annually obtained. Scratch the ground, drop in the seed, and lo! a crop will arise of from twelve to eighteen bushels per acre! Moreover, crop after crop may be taken from the same field, and yet after the expiry of four or five years, with a little rest and careful weeding, the land will still be responsive.

On the great speculative tracts of wheat grown in California and Oregon, the grain is not made up into sheaves, and as with us carted to the barn-yard and laboriously built into stacks, just to be again taken down; but is thrashed out on the field almost as it is reaped, placed in sacks, and then shipped for Liverpool and other English or Scottish ports, whence it is distributed over the length and breadth of Great Britain; and so our farm across the Atlantic is made to yield a large proportion of our daily bread. As an instance of what can be done in the United States, it may be mentioned that in the course of a recent harvest, while a wheat-field was being cut down, a portion of the grain was cut, thrashed, made into flour, baked into bread, and fired, in the course of a very few minutes; biscuits out of the same crop being distributed to the harvesters as they were at work!

The largest grain-farm in the United States is in all probability that of the Brothers Grandin, on the Red River of the North in Minnesota. It embraces over thirty-eight thousand acres, most of which is good wheat-land. One hundred horses and mules are already in use for cultivation, as well as seventy-five ploughs, fifty-five harrows, twenty-four self-reapers, and seven steam-thrashers. Elevators for loading the grain have been erected by the side of the river; and up to the present time fully seven thousand acres of land have been broken upon for cultivation. The same firm have a stock-farm of twenty-seven hundred acres. The wheat that is grown and the beef that is fed on this great farm all come to Europe. In the United States during the year 1878, it may be mentioned, that for the use of the American people and for the population of other countries, there were grown and harvested three hundred and sixty million bushels of wheat, and four hundred and five million bushels of oats, whilst of Indian corn there were grown in all one thousand three hundred and forty million bushels. Of the latter grain, countless acres are also sown for the feed of cattle and swine. In those seasons in which it is impossible for this cereal to be grown and reaped at a profit, it is sometimes converted into fuel, which burns excellently!

The way the American farmers look at the question of Indian corn is an eminently practical way; they say: 'We are far from a market; and to plant, reap, and thrash out corn, then carry it a long distance to market, would scarcely pay us, as the grain would not bring more than about twenty-eight cents per bushel. But by converting the corn into beef, in other words by feeding cattle with it, it brings us from forty to fifty cents; and the cattle are bought and taken away as they stand.' And

that is a thoroughly sensible way of putting the case.

It was in the United States that the production of cheese in factories was begun; and some of the dairies, or rather butter and cheese manufactories, are on a large scale. Enormous quantities of these excellent comestibles are made on our farm across the Atlantic and sent to us for consumption. The extent of the trade will be apparent when it is known that for freight alone, the butter and cheese exported cost as much as two hundred thousand pounds. American cheese is yearly becoming of greater importance to the British commissariat; and several English landlords have warned their tenants that, unless they speedily develop a new style of manufacture and produce a better article, they will be beaten by American enterprise and ingenuity. Indeed they are already beaten; the cheese of last season in many a farm of the dairy districts of Scotland is so unsaleable that arrangements are seriously contemplated for sending the milk to Edinburgh, Glasgow, and other large towns, instead of making it into cheese as formerly. Throughout the United States cow-keeping is carried on both on a small and a large scale. In Californian dairies, butter is the chief product; but in districts where there is no market at hand, cheese only is made. In Californian dairies, great attention is paid to the feeding and general keep of the cattle; and by the most unremitting care large milkings are obtained; while the butter supplies are in keeping with the produce. Some dairymen, many of whom are Swiss, keep from three to four hundred cows; but plenty of dairies exist with a smaller herd. Many of the dairies in America belong to Scotchmen; there is for instance George Campbell's Dairy. George, we are told, keeps one hundred and ten head of grade short-horn cows, which average during the season two hundred pounds of butter per cow; some of the animals yielding as much as fifty-five pounds of milk per day. In 1876, Mr Campbell milked seventy-four cows on pasture, raised twenty-one calves, and turned out six thousand four hundred and forty pounds of cheese, and eleven thousand four hundred and forty-eight pounds of butter.

Californian dairies, however, are on a small scale compared with the cheese manufactories in other states of the Union; they yield, so to speak, but a drop in the bucket compared to the 'oceans of milk' which are operated upon in the eastern portion of the state of New York, where the milkings of many farms are put together on the co-operative system, or where the owners of a cheese factory contract to buy the milk of many farmers at a fixed sum per gallon all the year round, for conversion into cheese, to be sent chiefly to the markets of Great Britain. Utica is the heart of the great cheese district of New York state. There is at that place a cheese exchange, where a large amount of business is transacted; from ten to sixteen thousand boxes will be sold at a meeting, ninety per cent. of the whole being destined for the English markets; and special trains are necessary at certain seasons for its transport to the place of shipment. At the sales there is very little sampling, thousands of boxes changing hands on the reputation of a factory. A few samples are sometimes shewn; but it may be safely asserted that two-thirds of the cheese business is accomplished on the reputation acquired

by makers. A cheese factory of moderate dimensions will take in the milk of two thousand cows per diem; the milk of each patron of the establishment is weighed and credited to him as it is received, the weighing vessel being of a capacity to hold five hundred pounds of milk. The cows which are most valued are Holsteins and Ayrshires; the former will yield from eight to ten thousand pounds of milk in a season. There are over thirteen million cows in the United States, which is six times more than there are in Great Britain, and which is calculated at the rate of a cow to every five persons!

It is known that there are over three thousand factories for the making of cheese throughout America, and that one thousand five hundred million pounds are made annually, as also three hundred and fifty million pounds of butter; the combined value of the two products being three hundred and fifty million dollars. The cheese is manufactured on a uniform plan, each factory having its own formula and its own particular 'wrinkles.' Much machinery is used in the manufacture; indeed the uses of machinery of all kinds, as well as the benefits which result from a division of labour, are largely recognised throughout the United States.

The growth of the trade in 'dead-meat' between America and Great Britain has been rapid. It is yet barely three years old; but there is every probability of over a hundred million pounds-weight of excellent beef and mutton reaching us during the current twelve months from the United States, in addition to an increased importation of live sheep and oxen. There are few who are able to realise how enormous is the stock of beef-cattle in America. The territories of the wild-horse and the bison are now chiefly occupied by oxen, whose destination is the Mersey or the Clyde; and in the end their destiny will be to afford wholesome food to the people who inhabit the British Islands. It has been computed that there are now being fed in the United States more than twenty millions of cattle, thirty-four millions of sheep, thirty-two millions of swine, together with thirteen millions of milch-cows; while for use in the cultivation of the land and for the purpose of carting and carrying, there are twelve millions of horses and mules.

Another contribution made by American producers to the British commissariat is in the form of enormous quantities of corned or preserved beef packed in tins, without any bone. Other preserved meats than corned beef also reach this country in quantity; in the space of two months as many as eighteen thousand cases of such food have been known to enter the Clyde, in addition to the enormous quantities arriving in the Thames and the Mersey. As each case may on the average be taken to weigh seventy pounds, the reader will be able to form his own idea of the important part which is played in strengthening our commissariat by these wholesale importations of cooked food of a palatable and wholesome kind. Some of the American 'packeries,' as they are called, kill and dress in the season over a thousand cattle per day for the purpose of cooking, canning, and exporting to Europe the meat alluded to. For a period of four months the preparation of these tinned meats goes on at Chicago with great industry, hundreds of persons

being employed in the business at remunerative wages.—Many other food-products reach us from America to which we need not at present refer, enough having, we think, been said to shew how valuable to all parties is this important traffic.

TWICE BETROTHED.

IN FOUR PARTS.—PART I.

'You had better forget me, dear—better learn to forget—and I, too, must school myself to do the same. Indeed, indeed, Leonard, it must be so.' And the girl's lip trembled as she faltered out the words; and she bent her eyes upon the ground, that her face might not be seen as she spoke them.

'It is a lesson I shall be very slow to learn,' answered the young man bitterly. 'Women, it seems, are apter pupils, and can throw over those they love, or who at any rate love them, as lightly as they discard a soiled ribbon or a faded flower. I know well enough that I have little beyond an honest man's affection to offer. The luxuries which wealth can buy'—

'That is not kind,' interrupted Annie, looking up and confronting him with eyes that flashed through their tears, while the colour rose quickly to her pale cheek; 'and what is worse, Leonard, it is unjust. Have you known so little of me that you judge me as one to prefer a life of ease, of splendour if you will, to— Ah, Mr Merton—Cousin Leonard, as I called you in happier days, when we were content to pick hazel-nuts and gather violets side by side as boy and girl, without realising how cold and hard might be the future that awaited us—cannot you be merciful to Annie Irwine when she has to choose one out of two paths that lie before her, as before most of us, and chooses that of duty!'

'Then you mean to give me up?—I am but a briefless barrister, and no great loss,' replied the young man, in a voice that was a little softened by the appeal which the girl had made—'to give me up, and to marry Sir Albert Atwood?'

'As to giving you up, cousin,' said Annie quietly, 'you know well that I break no troth, am false to no vows in telling you, as I do, that I cannot be your wife. You like me, I am sure, and'—

'For like, say love, Annie!' interrupted Leonard in his turn. 'But do not let us quarrel. I shall leave this place, and go back to London, and my chambers and my law-books, and try to be resigned to my great loss. Never mind me! When are you to be married to this man?'

'If you mean Sir Albert, Leonard,' returned Annie simply, 'I do not know that I am going to be married to him at all. But, if he were to ask me, I could not, for my parents' sake, for poor papa's sake above all, say "No."'

Leonard Merton frowned and kept silence for a moment. His love for Annie was sincere; and she was worth loving, as pretty and good a girl as any in the broad marches of Wales; and he had known her since, as a schoolboy in a jacket, he had come down to spend the holidays with his old bachelor uncle at Tremadoc. But even in his pain and disappointment, he could not but own to himself that Annie was justified in her rejection of his suit. The old vicar, Miss Irwine's father, a gentle, scholarly recluse, had been com-

pelled by feeble health and failing eyesight to resign his preferment, and he and his were now very poor.

There were those who said that Mr Irwine ought to have held to his living, which was a good one, at least for a Welsh border parish, and to have got influence brought to bear upon the bishop to make things comfortable. But the meek scholar had strict and straightforward ideas of duty that forbade this; and accordingly the family had left the pretty parsonage, with its spreading mulberries and mellow peach-walls, and were living in lodgings in the village, on some meagre little private income scarcely enough to keep the wolf from the door. And people said that the rich young baronet's evident admiration for Annie would prove a godsend to the late occupants of Tremadoc Vicarage.

Sir Albert was a rich man; had been born—so the gossips averred—with a gold spoon, not a silver one, in his mouth; but, if he had, his father had been at the pains of fashioning it from the crude ore. The first baronet and founder of the fortune, Sir George, had been a bluff, hard-headed north-countryman, prone to boast over his sumptuous dinner-table how he had forged iron and puddled iron, and been foreman, overseer, ganger, and sub-contractor, before he rose to opulence; a result which his shrewd and persevering boldness well deserved.

George Atwood had married late in life. His two daughters were well dowered; but the bulk of his property, shares and stock, land and mines, went with the title to his only son, who dwelt at Tremadoc Place, a Tudor mansion purchased by his father, and of which, as report declared, it would be Annie's fault if she were not the mistress.

'I never envied Atwood till now,' said Leonard Merton at the conclusion of the interview—'never envied him; I mean his wealth and his grandeur, and the fact that he was born to find the world at his feet. But I do envy him now. I shall go, but not until after Thursday. The tunnel is to be opened—or inaugurated, as penny-a-liners phrase it—and it would never do for the standing counsel of the Company to be absent from the ceremony.'

The tunnel of which Leonard spoke was one which had been recently constructed, at great expense, beneath the wide estuary of the river, half-English, half-Welsh, which ran past Tremadoc to the sea. A new Company, of which Sir Albert was chairman, had laid out the short railway line and dug the docks that were to facilitate the transport of pig-iron, blooms, and bars from the Atwood iron-works to markets best reached by sea; and the opening of the tunnel for traffic was to be the occasion for festivities, addresses, and rejoicing. The directors, the secretary, the engineers, and legal advisers of the Company would all be there. Leonard, as one of the latter, could not well be a defaulter without giving rise to ill-natured remarks.

Leonard Merton was not quite accurate in describing himself as a briefless barrister; but it is certain that the most profitable portion of the little forensic work he had to do was that which fell to his lot as one of the standing counsel for the Tremadoc and Gwyllt Bay Company. It was Sir Albert's careless good-nature which had put that

annual hundred in the way of the struggling neophyte, and now, for that very reason, Leonard felt that he must resign it. He could not be under obligation to Annie's husband that was to be, to the rich man who had robbed him—so in the soreness of his heart he declared—of his one ewe-lamb.

The tunnel that was, as the leader-writer of the *County Gazette* affirmed, practically to abolish the impediment presented by the river Arva, with its shifting channel and treacherous sands, was opened with due solemnity and much cheering. There were present officials and magnates of finance, local dignitaries, and a host of guests. The cavernous depths of the excavation were brilliantly lighted; a train was brought in, and duly puffed and snorted its defiance of conquered Arva rolling impotently overhead, and there were speeches from the Lord-lieutenant of the shire, and from the mayors of the towns adjacent, and from the glib Secretary of the Company, and the design and the execution of the new work were glorified exceedingly.

And then came lunch—for nothing in Britain can be done without the national adjuncts of eating and drinking—and long tables were laid, as if by the deft hands of obedient gnomes, and there were clattering of knives and forks, rattling of plates, and popping of champagne corks, in that naturally gaunt and gloomy place, above which ran the river. The latter circumstance—adding, as it did, a spice of novelty and of excitement to the subterranean merry-making—served to heighten the spirits of the company to a pitch of buoyant hilarity, and there were toasts and speeches, of the usual frothy type of festive oratory, as the wine flowed freely.

Probably the saddest heart of any present was that of Leonard Merton; but the young barrister knew too well what our imperious code of good-breeding exacts, to play ostensibly the part of a kill-joy at the feast. But the effort to take his share in the conversation was a painful one, and still more painful was it to watch Annie from afar, seated beside her mother, and to mark the assiduity of Sir Albert Atwood's attentions. Sir Albert, whose praises each speaker had enunciated with the emphasis due to the general entertainer, was indeed in some sort the hero of the hour. The coal and iron of those great mines and foundries which the new railway was to connect with the sea, were his. He was chairman of the Company, presumed originator of the daring project of the sub-riverain tunnel, and founder of the feast.

In personal appearance young Sir Albert was well enough, a plump, florid young man, with blond whiskers, rattling watch-chain, and a voice that was perhaps a little too loud and self-confident. He had neither the inches nor the handsome face of Leonard Merton; but he was a favourite with most ladies, and with many men. Slightly boastful in discourse and sanguine in disposition he was; but then his road through life had been made so easy for him, that some faults of manner might be pardoned in one who had inherited so many annual thousands and so much power.

Liberal and free-handed, on a gala occasion like the present, Sir Albert certainly was. It was from his private purse, not from the corporate

purse of the Tremadoc and Gwyllt Bay Company, that the cost of the sumptuous luncheon would be defrayed, nor had he forgotten the many workmen directly and indirectly employed in the lately completed undertaking, whose shouts, over their beef and strong ale, might be heard at intervals from a distant part of the tunnel. And in seeking to change Miss Irwine into Lady Atwood, Sir Albert gave proof that he could be disinterested in his matrimonial views.

Annie, sitting beside Mrs Irwine, looked very pretty, but somewhat grave and sad; so other girls, who marvelled at her good luck in drawing so handsome a prize from the marriage lottery, averred. She never once looked at Leonard; nor did Sir Albert succeed in evoking more than a very faint smile from her in response to all his attempts to amuse. But when the luncheon came to an end, and the waiters began to huddle away the paraphernalia of the banquet, and gay groups walked to and fro chatting and laughing, Miss Irwine allowed her wealthy admirer to give her his arm and lead her a little apart from the crowd.

'It is not the first time,' said Sir Albert, in a voice which, for him, was less steady than its owner could have desired, 'that I have said to you, Miss Irwine, how much I love you, and how I should be happy indeed if you would let me teach you to care a little for me. Let me speak again and ask you Annie, to be my wife.'

Annie trembled and grew pale. She knew that Sir Albert would put the question, and knew too what must be her reply to it, but made a hesitating answer: 'This seems so strange a place—and time—to speak on such a subject.'

'I don't see that at all,' cheerily rejoined the baronet. 'A tale of true love has been told, I daresay, in odder places than a tunnel; and besides, I feel a little vain of having hit out the first idea of this same underground line, which Bounce and Braggett, the contractors, have carried out so well. People call me a lucky fellow, and certainly the world has smiled on me hitherto; but money and success and station are not so much to me, dearest, as would be the pleasure of calling you my wife. Say "Yes" to my suit, and make me the happiest of the happy!'

'Your proposal, Sir Albert, does me very great honour, and I—have—no choice but to accept it, if, after hearing what I have to say to you, you think fit to renew it.—Nay,' she said more earnestly, as the baronet attempted to interrupt her, 'I must be heard. It is but honourable, but fair to myself as well as to you, that there should be no concealment at the outset.' And then gravely, but with an innocent frankness that would not be checked, Annie Irwine told her wealthy suitor all.

For her parents' sake, and most of all for that of the gentle blind father whose income had stopped with the stoppage of his clerical duty, it behoved Miss Irwine, if she married, to marry one who had the means and the will to soothe the declining years of those who were dear to her. Sir Albert, she knew, would promise her that the old clergyman and his wife should have the wind of adversity tempered to them, and that she, the daughter, should never be wholly separated from mother and father. But then she could not give Sir Albert, much as she liked and esteemed him,

her whole heart. She meant to do her duty by him. She would strive to be a good wife. But—but—she avowed, sobbing, there was—there had been, another.

Sir Albert bore the annoyance of this tolerably well for a man somewhat spoiled by Fortune. He knew that though she did not name him whom she preferred, Leonard Merton was the lover whom Annie was forced to discard; but he did not mention Leonard's name, or owe Leonard a grudge, as baser natures might have done. And Annie could not but appreciate his kindness as he assured her, in words that were at once tender and respectful, how well he wished towards Mr and Mrs Irwine, and how gladly he would concur in their daughter's plans for their happiness. For him, it should be his task to make his wife love him. It should not be his fault if he failed. Would Annie marry him?

'Yes!'—the little word, that from a woman's lips means so much, was uttered; but almost at the same instant there came a strange confused noise and a crash as of falling masonry, and a loud cry of alarm from many voices.

'Don't be frightened, Annie,' exclaimed the baronet, changing colour; 'though something seems to have happened yonder!'

PART II.

Something had indeed happened. The baronet's words, even as he uttered them, were being fulfilled to the letter. Those eminent engineers, Bounce and Braggett, were prevented by the multiplicity of their professional engagements from being personally present at the auspicious opening of the tunnel which they had designed and built. But their healths had been drunk, with eloquent encomiums, and one speaker, in a burst of champagne-inspired rhetoric, had gone so far as to liken them to the genii who reared the fairy palace at Aladdin's bidding. And now brickwork was toppling down, with ominous rattle, upon the floor, damp already with the water that began to drip and trickle from a hundred crevices.

'The river is breaking through! We shall be drowned!' cried many voices at once; and there were shrill feminine shrieks and angry exclamations, and a rush towards one end of the tunnel, followed by a halt and a rush in the opposite direction. Human beings, in a condition of undisciplined panic, are very like so many sheep, and equally prone to congregate in gregarious helplessness. Several of the gas jets had by this time been extinguished, and the partial darkness added to the horrors of the situation.

The position was no pleasant one. Bricks, some singly, some in masses, were crashing down fast from the roof and sides of the tunnel; and if no one had as yet been hurt, there seemed no reason for anticipating a continuance of this impunity. A deep, sullen sound, like the wash and gurgle of water, grew threateningly loud, and the floor, lately dry, was covered with water already deep enough to wet the dainty little boots of the lady guests, and rapidly gaining on those immured in the tunnel, and reluctant to make a decided move towards either extremity, for fear of running into the very danger they sought to avoid.

'It's full-tide, over our heads, in the Arva. An iron-clad could find water deep enough to float her now,' said some one disconsolately. That very fact that the estuary would be filled from shore to shore with the strong flood-tide setting in from the sea, had lent a zest to the meal so pleasantly enjoyed in those gas-lit recesses. But it was less agreeable to be reminded now of the circumstance that Neptune, in all the pomp and power of his marine array, was close at hand.

'The workmen are drunk! They hardly understood me; and those who caught a glimmer of my meaning, stared at me stupidly, like a mob of frightened cattle,' groaned out the surveyor in charge, a subordinate of Messrs Bounce and Braggett, as he rushed back from an attempt to summon aid. 'That Mr Merton, who knows them, and can speak their language, is trying what he can do with the Welshmen, who are the soberest of the lot; but our regular navvies' brains are drowned in ale.'

Sure enough, Leonard Merton came hurrying along the gallery at the head of some score of hardy mountaineers, whose superior temperance or tougher endurance had kept them sober. 'Quick, quick!' cried Leonard in Welsh, and pointing first to a pile of ladders, boards, and scaffold props which the fortunate carelessness of Messrs Bounce and Braggett's underlings had left piled up in a recess, and then to a ghastly fissure through which the water was gushing—quick, lads, or Arva will be upon us!

Those have an imperfect idea of what labour means who have never seen how fiercely men can work when life and death hang on the issue. So it was in this case. In a time incredibly short, but which yet seemed long to those who watched the process, ladders were reared, an apology for a scaffold was put up, and with boards and struts and scraps of miscellaneous timber the damage was repaired. Then there was a cry that the water was breaking in elsewhere like a millstream, and off darted the breathless band of rescuers to fight in a new place the common foe.

Leonard, as he urged on the rest, found time to say that he had sent a messenger to summon the train which had, for show purposes, been brought into the tunnel, and which might, if at such short notice steam could be got up, do yeoman's service in extricating the company from the awkward predicament in which they found themselves. To endeavour to reach either end of the tunnel on foot would be, for the ladies, rash, so much brickwork was falling, and so much water pouring through. He said this, and ran on.

Already the ripple and gurgle of the water, now ankle-deep as it washed the flooded floor, sounded anything but invitingly to the ear, while the crash of the tumbling bricks awoke the sullen echoes of the tunnel far and near. Yet Leonard and his gallant band were not left to toil alone, for several of the more able-bodied of the male guests volunteered their hearty aid; and one by one, and two by two, the sturdy men of pick and shovel came staggering and blinking to 'bear a hand,' as they phrased it, as their beer-benumbed faculties were gradually aroused by the imminence of the peril. The ladies, in their terror, clung to the arms of their protectors; and Sir Albert, who had both Annie and Mrs Irwine under his charge, was unable to render any help in the good work on hand.

The water deepened but slowly, escaping, as it doubtless did, at one of the extremities of the tunnel, and it was not for several minutes after the first breaking in of the intrusive flood that it rose to the knees of those imprisoned there. The brackish stream ran so swiftly as to render it difficult for the weaker to keep their feet, and was evidently gaining depth, as new threads of water came trickling through the roof and fell splashing on the flooded floor.

'We shall be drowned—drowned like rats in a hole! Let us make a push at anyrate for daylight and safety!' cried a voice.

'No, no!' was the answer of those on the outskirts of the throng. 'Here comes the train!'

It was true; the lamps of the engine, like the red eyes of a friendly dragon, gleamed through the depths of the tunnel, and the shrill scream of the steam-whistle, more welcome at such a moment than sweetest music could have been, made itself heard.

'Look alive, gentlemen all!' bawled out, in warning accents, the rough engine-driver, as the iron wheels splashed and churned amidst the water. 'I'll not be able, soon, to keep the fire alight.'

There was a rush for safety. This was no time for standing on order or precedence. Delicate ladies were thankful to find themselves huddled into cattle-vans or ballast-trucks. Boozey navvies, with bloodshot eyes and stammering tongues, found themselves lolling on the cushions of first-class carriages. But, with some cramming and squeezing, there was room for all; and now a shout arose: 'Come back, there! Merton, all of you, come back! We only wait for you!'

'Make haste and clear the tunnel!' called out Leonard, panting, from his perch on a ladder reared against the dripping wall. 'We must keep back the water here, or you'd have it up to the very boiler. Sound the whistle when you see daylight beyond, and leave us to shift for ourselves!'

The train was in motion before the words were finished, and again the weighty wheels revolving lashed the turbid water into yellow foam. Slowly and painfully the engine dragged its load, while fast the water deepened.

'Now, men!' cried Merton; 'to it again, and with a will!'

There was no need to indicate the point where the peril presented itself. Every eye was fixed upon a ghastly chasm through which the brine poured in a rill that ever gained in volume. Furiously, desperately, the handful of gallant fellows—now reinforced by volunteers until they were seven-and-thirty strong—toiled to keep back the spouting water. Should it rise high enough to reach the boiler and cylinder of the engine, all would be lost, and the tunnel a mere charnel-house. At any cost, the danger must be staved off.

Men's wits, as well as their hands, are apt to be quickened under the stimulus of peril, and many a feat of rough and ready engineering was on that day performed, as with brick and timber, with cordage, tarpaulins, and all materials that could be pressed into the service, the workmen fought to keep out the foe. At last—welcome signal!—there came to their ears the shrill, piercing note of the steam-whistle, and they knew that the train, with

its living freight, had reached daylight and free air, and that the gallant forlorn-hope might at last consult its own hitherto suppressed instinct of self-preservation.

'Steady, now, lads; see that none are left behind!' called out Leonard, and he was the last to swing himself down from the improvised scaffold, and to join the retreating party. Fast as they ran, the roar of the cascade within pursued them faster still, like the voice of some monster loath to be balked of its prey; and though the water, before they cleared the tunnel, was more than waist deep, they cleared it, and, without the loss of a life, emerged into the fresh free air, and scrambling on, reached at length the place where, at an angle of the line, the train had come to a halt.

'Safe? All safe? Tell us, for God's sake!' cried out fifty voices, male and female, of those who were stretching their heads out of the windows of the carriages to greet the brave men who now came panting up.

'All safe! It was a near thing, though,' cheerily answered the representative of Messrs Bounce and Braggett, who had laboured among the best, to avert the ruin which the 'scamped' work of his employers had brought about. But he who had the best right to be spokesman—Leonard Merton—had already separated himself from the rest, and avoiding the thanks and praises of those whom he had saved, had struck into a field-path that led towards his solitary home. Annie Irwine went back to her home as the affianced bride of Sir Albert Atwood. Very grave, thoughtful, and sad, was the face of Sir Albert himself. He had lost money doubtless by the late disaster, but that he could bear with philosophy. Yet, for an engaged and accepted suitor, his mien, as he returned to Plas Madoc, was strangely moody and depressed.

THE BONINS ISLANDS.

ABOUT five hundred miles south of Yokohama, the capital of Japan, there lie three groups of islands, known as the Bonins, and which as regards soil, climate, and general beauty can scarcely be matched anywhere. Let us see what Mr Consul Robertson of Yokohama, who visited the Bonins in 1875, has to say about these charming islands and their history.

The northern group are known as Parry, and the southernmost as Bailey or Coffin. The central group, nine and a quarter miles in length, consists of Stapleton, Buckland, and Peel Islands, the last of these being nearly five miles long. Hillsborough Island, the largest of the Bailey group, is seven and a half miles long by one and a quarter broad. There would appear to be little reason to doubt that the Japanese were the earliest discoverers of these islands; but it is to Captain Beechey, who visited them in H.M.S. *Blossom* in the year 1827, that we are indebted for the first trustworthy reports. The *Blossom*, despatched from England for the purpose of co-operating with Franklin's and Parry's Arctic expeditions, having failed to meet the explorers at the rendezvous in Behring's Straits, proceeded with her commander Captain Beechey to the Pacific,

and in the course of her cruise visited the Bonins in June 1827. Here the captain remained, in the harbour of Port Lloyd, for several days, taking possession of the group on behalf of Great Britain—a fact established by nailing to a tree a sheet of copper punctured with a declaration to this effect—and giving the various islands their present nomenclature. The copper, in a fair state of preservation, is now in Mr Robertson's possession.

Although at the period of the *Blossom's* visit the population was limited to two shipwrecked sailors, it was soon destined to receive reinforcements. In 1830, a party of mixed nationality, and comprising some Sandwich islanders, arrived at Port Lloyd from Honolulu and hoisted the British flag. They were provided with live-stock and seeds, and would seem to have thriven in their settlement, so much so that, in 1842, hogs and goats abounded, and a fair amount of land was found under cultivation. The colonists gained a few accessions during the eleven following years, until, on the arrival of Commodore Perry's expedition, which visited the islands in June 1853, they numbered thirty-one members, nine being of European or American nationality, the remainder natives of the Pacific islands, and children. Commodore Perry devotes some space in his published work to an account of the group, and even submitted to his government a scheme for their more perfect colonisation, deeming the islands useful from their position as a coasting station for the contemplated mail-line from San Francisco to China. Urging upon the settlers the desirability of living under some organised government, he drew up a simple code for their guidance. Its rules, however, were never enforced, and are already forgotten. Some live-stock were left on the islands by Perry, who also subsequently forwarded from America a present of useful seeds and implements of husbandry for the use of the colonists. Some visits of men-of-war and whalers occurred during the following years; and in 1861 an effort was made by Japan to colonise Peel Island, when a special Commissioner and about one hundred colonists arrived from Yedo. The Japanese soon wearied of their colonisation scheme, and withdrew in batches; and in 1863 the Commissioner himself followed, leaving, however, a stone inscribed with a declaration that the islands were discovered by Japan, that they were revisited in 1861, and that they still continue the property of that empire.

Mr Robertson's visit was made in H.M.S. *Curlew* in November 1875, when also the Japanese government lighthouse tender *Meiji Maru* called at the islands. He describes the character of the land as hilly, marked here and there with bold crags. The hills are clothed with luxuriant vegetation, comprising cabbage-palms and tree-ferns; and the valleys, which are girt round with fringes of trees, appear to be rich and prolific. That the islands are of volcanic origin is more than probable—Commodore Perry indeed expresses an opinion

that Port Lloyd was at one time the centre of an active volcano—and hence no doubt the richness and fertility of the soil. A solitary hut at the head of the harbour, from which the American flag was displayed, and a few canoes drawn up on the beach or sailing along the shore, furnished the only evidence of colonisation visible by the new arrivals as their vessel anchored. They shortly learned, however, that the community then numbered sixty-nine souls—thirty-seven males and thirty-two females—twenty of the whole number being children. Five only of its present inhabitants may be described as white. They hail respectively from England, France, Germany, Holland, and the Azores, and appear to have arrived at the islands for the most part in whaling-vessels during the last thirty years. The dark-skinned population is composed of natives of the Sandwich Islands, Agrigan, the Caroline and Kingsmill groups, and comprise a Bermudian, a Malay, and two Japanese women. Thirty-five of the number were born on the islands, and exhibit the usual curious effects of mixed alliance.

The holdings of the settlers are dotted over the shores of the Harbour, or lie in some of the sheltered nooks which indent the coast of the island. Here, in the cultivated patches which surround their cottages, may be seen the sweet-potato, *taro*, pumpkins and other garden vegetables growing luxuriantly. On the sloping hill-sides, plantations of sugar-cane, maize, and coconut appear to succeed, and but for the occasional hurricanes, would thrive abundantly. Plantain and lemon groves are numerous, and there is no lack of running streams. The visitors found the settlers provided with an abundance of tame pigs, geese, ducks, and fowls; and in the season—the months of April, May, and June—enormous numbers of turtle are secured without much labour, one man capturing as many as fifty during the day.

The dwelling-houses are rudely constructed. The side-posts and rafters are of hardwood, and being covered with the leaves of the cabbage-palm, afford weather-tight shelter. The floors are boarded, and the house divided into a dwelling and a sleeping room, the kitchen being in a building apart. The furniture of the cottages is sparse and simple; a rough deal table, chairs, a bed, a shelf bearing the family earthenware, a clock, and some cheap gaily coloured prints, which line the walls, being its leading features. Everything being kept scrupulously clean and neat, the good order of the households impressed the visitors favourably. It may be added that there are few books to be met with, and that only one man in the islands—Webb, an Englishman—can read and write.

It may easily be imagined that the wants of the settlers are neither numerous nor hard to satisfy. Clothing and calico of a light texture, salt, soap, tobacco, hardware, nails, knives, tools of useful description, and ammunition, comprise their chief wants; and for these they have been hitherto indebted, in exchange for their island-produce, to passing whalers putting into the islands for refreshment. On the occasion of Mr Robertson's visit, a goodly supply of presents, consisting of blankets, cottons, grocery, and other useful articles, was forwarded for the use of the settlers by the Japanese government; nor were their needs overlooked by Captain Church, who provided them

with shirts, shoes, flannel, and other necessary gear from the stores of H.M.S. *Curlew*.

Mr Robertson mentions some thirty varieties of wood growing on the islands. Wild-cactus, curry-plant, wild-sage, and celery are also found; and mosses, lichens, and ferns are said to abound. Of metallic minerals, excepting some traces of iron pyrites found in Peel Island, there would appear to be no indications. Earthquakes and tidal waves are frequent. The peculiarity of the latter is that no bore rushes up the harbour; the water rises suddenly—precisely as it rises in a bowl in which an inverted tumbler is plunged—and as suddenly recedes. The earthquakes are probably slight, as the inhabitants do not seem to dread them. Hurricanes, which prevail it is to be presumed at the change of monsoon, are more serious in their consequences, especially to the crops.

Of the inhabitants as he found them Mr Robertson speaks by no means unfavourably. Rumour, he says, ascribed to the settlers of the group a character for lawless life and irregular conduct, of which, however, he saw no evidence. He found a small colony of a simple mixed race, living to all appearance in decency and order, clean in their persons, neat in dress, and dwelling in comfortable homes, to which they hospitably invited the stranger. But to this bright side of the picture there is a dark reverse. Of religion they know nothing; they are utterly uneducated, and are as apathetic as the savage to all but the pressing needs of every-day existence. Owing to the want of government amongst themselves, human life has at times been somewhat insecure, one of the settlers having informed Mr Robertson that within an experience of twenty-five years eleven men had to his knowledge met with violent ends; this however, is to be accounted for by the fact that the islands were the refuge of the runaway scum of whalers and trading-ships, among whom quarrels must have been of common occurrence. Notwithstanding this, the islanders appear to feel some repugnance towards settled government, and ask that they 'may be permitted to live as Bonin Islanders.'

Let us hope that some good may result from Mr Robertson's visit, and from the ample and exhaustive report of the little group which he has given to us; and that the attention of the governments which claim its possession may at least be drawn to the responsibilities which they have undertaken. We have seen that England, through Captain Beechey, and Japan on more than one occasion, have claimed the ownership of the islands; and on one or other of these powers would seem to devolve the natural duty of guiding the young settlement through the perils of a peculiarly dangerous infancy, and of laying the foundation of a happy and prosperous community in the distant Pacific. Japan is manifestly unfitted for this. She has proved herself unable to colonise the magnificent island of Yesso, which lies at her very doors, and which, permanently settled, would have afforded her a powerful bulwark against the Russian aggression she so constantly dreads. There is little probability of her proving a wise administratrix of the Anglo-Melanesian settlement which she has repeatedly tried to colonise, and as often abandoned. It is left to England, therefore, to take this group beneath her protecting wings, and

to initiate some simple and inexpensive system of self-government there; or, failing this, to renounce definitively the sovereignty of the islands, claimed on her behalf by Captain Beechey in 1827.

A CHAPTER OF REAL LIFE.

MANY years have elapsed since the circumstance about to be recorded took place. Most if not all of the actors concerned in it are dead, and the sensation it caused in the neighbourhood where it occurred is long since forgotten. In what follows—a plain statement of facts—all allusion to time, names, or locality is for obvious reasons omitted.

Mr S—, as for convenience we shall call him, was a country gentleman of fortune and rank. He had married young, and very happily; but his home was childless; and the disappointment—keenly felt—was aggravated by the fact of there being a title in the family, to which his son, if he had one, would succeed. Great, therefore, was the joy and exultation when, after years of hope deferred, it was announced that the nursery at Blank House was likely to have at last a baby tenant. Much preparation was made for the event, which it was arranged was to take place in London. A confidential servant, who had formerly as head-nurse had the care of Mrs S— in her childhood, and was devoted to her, was installed in the house, to watch over her health in the present circumstances. This woman on quitting service had elected to become a ladies' monthly nurse, and for this purpose had, as it is called, 'taken out her practice' in a maternity hospital; and had passed the examinations needful before obtaining the certificate of a duly qualified nurse.

Mrs S— professed implicit confidence in the skill of her quondam servant. It was her wish to be attended in her confinement by her alone. She represented to her husband that she preferred a female attendant to a doctor, and so worked upon him that he at length gave a reluctant consent; stipulating, however, that when the event was imminent the doctor was to be sent for, so as to be at hand in case of any danger or difficulty supervening.

Nothing untoward did happen. The lady, under the nurse's care, gave birth to a little daughter, which before the doctor left the house he saw, and pronounced to be a fine healthy infant. The sex of the small stranger was of course a disappointment; but anything in the shape of a baby was welcome in the long childless house. And when in process of time there came the expectation of another olive-branch, hope revived of better luck on the next occasion. Nor was hope deceived. With great triumph, the faithful nurse, again in attendance, announced to Mr S— that his wife was safe, and congratulated him on being the father of 'the finest boy that ever was seen.'

The young heir thrived apace. But the parents were ere long doomed to prove what so often happens—namely, that blessings ardently coveted, fail when granted to give the happiness expected from them. With the arrival of his children Mr S—'s domestic felicity departed. His idolised wife became a confirmed invalid. After the birth of the first infant her health and spirits began gradually to fail, and now the whole nervous

system seemed hopelessly disorganised. In vain every means that wealth could procure or affection devise was resorted to. In vain she was taken from one place to another for change of scene and the best medical advice. Nothing could rouse her from the state of gloomy depression into which she had sunk. Instead of its former smiles and brightness, her face, if we may use the expression, wore a kind of 'hunted' look, painful to see. She took no interest in anything; even her children gave her no pleasure; nor did she ever rally from this melancholy condition; so that it was almost a matter of thankfulness when death came to end her unhappy existence.

The bereaved husband, however, continued long to mourn the wife to whom he was so tenderly attached. He lived in seclusion, forming no new ties, and devoting himself to the care of the children, now growing up to be objects of interest. From this state of things he was roused by a letter purporting to be from a person on her death-bed, who urgently entreated him to come to her without delay. She had, she said, a communication of the utmost importance to make, which could be revealed to no one but himself.

Mr S— lost no time in obeying the mysterious summons. Having seated himself beside the dying woman's bed, she addressed him with: 'I see sir, you do not know me. I am Nurse B—. I have sent for you to tell what has lain like lead upon me for years—what killed my poor mistress, and what will be a blow to yourself you will scarce be able to bear. But it must be done. She made me promise that before I left the world I would confess my crime and hers. My crime it was sir, for I planned it all, and over-persuaded her, poor dear!

'Mr S—, the children you are bringing up are not yours! For the fraud that has been practised on you respecting them, I alone am to blame, working as I did without ceasing upon your dear lady's anxiety to give you the heir she was pining for, and that your heart was set on—she that loved you so well, she could not bear to see you disappointed in anything. My calling as a midwife gave me, I urged upon her, plenty of opportunities to carry out the scheme; and I knew I could manage it so that there wouldn't be the least danger of ever being found out. But it was a long time before I could get her to consent, and of course when she once did, there was no drawing back.

'The daughter reared as yours, is the child of a poor servant-maid whose husband had deserted and left her to her fate. I heard of the distress she was in at the prospect of becoming a mother, and disguising myself so that I could ~~never~~ be known again, went to her, and said I knew of a lady who wanted to adopt an infant, and would pay handsomely for hers when born, provided no questions were asked. She was only too glad to close with my offer. I gave her a note addressed to A. B., with directions to have it left at a certain shop the minute she took ill; and when I knew it was near her time, I went daily to inquire after it. The people in the shop thought the veiled and muffled-up woman who called so often for her note in the dusk of the evening was some needy servant out of place. Oh, I took my measures well!

'At last the note was there. I hurried home,

got my mistress to bed, and spread the tidings in the house that she was indisposed, and a baby might soon be expected. I told you sir, the same thing, if you remember, on your return home from your club, and said you might now send for the doctor, whom you wished to be on the spot in case of accident. When he came, I had an interview with him, said I thought all would be right, and that I would call him if he was wanted. When the house was quiet, and every one safe out of the way or in bed, I slipped out with my latch-key. The porter in the hall had been ordered to watch. He roused up as I passed his great chair, and I said I was going for something I required for my lady, and would not be long away. A monthly nurse, you know sir, can do pretty much as she likes in a house, and need not give explanations of her goings and comings. Before I reached the woman's lodgings the infant had been born. I brought it home, terribly disappointed at its proving a girl, and with the prospect before me of having to contrive and do all over again.

Brokenly, and with many stops from emotion and weakness, the dying nurse gave these particulars. She went on to describe the remorse that took possession of Mrs S—, and the difficulty she had in persuading her to allow of another attempt to accomplish the desired object. The boy, she said, was the son of a poor couple overburdened with children, and the more readily parted with, as his father had died from the effects of an accident shortly before his birth. The same precautions for secrecy had been adopted in his case. There was not the slightest clue, and the fraud could never have been suspected or found out.

But the conscience-stricken lady could not rest. In despair at witnessing her sinking under the misery of which Nurse B— accused herself of being the cause, the latter implored her to make a clean breast and confess all to her husband. He would forgive her, the woman urged, sooner than let her die. But the hapless sufferer could not bear to criminate herself in his eyes, and risk the loss of this love. So she carried to the grave the burden of the guilty secret that was crushing her, having exacted from the nurse a solemn promise that before her death she would reveal all to Mr S—.

When, after long absence in foreign lands, the latter came to reside again at Blank House, he was accompanied by the young girl, his adopted daughter. What became of the supposed heir, who doubtless had been well provided for, did not transpire.

NEW USES OF PAPER.

THE world has lately heard of some extraordinary uses of paper. In devising new modes of utilising this article, Americans take the lead. Barrels composed of straw-paper are said to be manufactured by a New York firm. The pulp is subjected to a powerful hydraulic pressure; and when reduced to the required thickness, the halves are cut off at the end, and the pieces are then placed in a steam-drier, the sides trimmed evenly, and the substance thoroughly dried. The advantages of the barrels over wooden ones, we are told, are

lightness, cheapness, durability, and the prevention of flour from sifting out while in transit. They are constructed entirely by machinery, and the halves are cut so true that any pieces of the same size will readily fit together. Even as a protector of the bottoms of iron ships from rust and animal and vegetable growth, paper has been found effective. Various anti-fouling compositions have been applied to the purpose; but while all are expensive, none can be regarded as completely satisfactory. It has been proposed then simply to cover the bottoms of vessels with paper; but the difficulty has been to procure a marine cement which would serve to attach this material. After various trials, a cement has been invented which promises to be successful since it has been practically tested by a long voyage. As the paper was found in a good state of preservation, its trial as an anti-fouling agent was considered very satisfactory. This new use for paper has thus far been proved in sea-voyages; and with regard to land-travelling, it is well known how railway carriage-wheels have been manufactured from the same material. For this purpose the paper is cut into disks the diameter of the wheel, less the thickness of the tire, and subjected to a very great pressure, and then secured by iron flanges held by bolts passing through them and the paper. The wheel then receives a steel or iron flagged tire. Many advantages are claimed for the use of paper for this purpose; no other material of the same weight of which a wheel may be made, being considered to possess such strength. Mention of railways reminds us of the telegraph, and even with this indispensable accessory of railway traffic we find the subject of our article has something to do. Telegraph wires can be covered and insulated with paper-pulp, which may be applied either to a naked wire or to a wire which is already covered. The purpose of the paper covering is that of protection from injuries of the inclosed wire, or of the inclosed wire and material surrounding it; the injuries to be guarded against being of a mechanical or chemical nature; or the purpose may be for the electrical insulation of the wire, or for the strengthening of it, to resist strains.

In more general ways, there are various uses to which paper may be applied, as, for instance, the protection of plants in uncertain weather by old newspapers, which are recommended for this purpose. They are said to exclude a considerable amount of frost, and are useful inside frames with or without mats. The uses for which *papier-mâché* has been adapted seem to be almost endless. The possibility of its successful application to building purposes has been demonstrated; and now we hear that a Breslau firm have succeeded in making chimney-pots of paper. They are said to be far more durable than metal ones, as they are not liable to any form of corrosion, while being also lighter and far cheaper. Before the paper-pulp is moulded and compressed into

the required shape, it is treated with chemicals, which render it non-inflammable. Pulp made from wood has been taken in hand by cabinet-makers as well as paper-manufacturers. Mouldings are made of this substance for frames and decorative purposes, which have all the sharpness of outline possessed by the best carvings. Some of the French furniture-makers are said to have expressed great satisfaction at the new style of ornamentation, which will enable them to turn out their 'old oak-carvings' at a minimum cost as far as labour is concerned.

If paper may have something to do with the furnishing of our houses, it can take part none the less in respect to the manufacture of clothing and articles of dress. Some years ago, the most common if not the sole material for handkerchiefs in Japan was an almost diaphanous square of paper, the gossamer texture of which did not prevent a considerable degree of tenacity. Paper collars are common articles of wear; and cloth has been made from the Californian cactus, a plant which has been successfully used in the manufacture of paper. Brown paper may be recommended as a good lining for the garments of ill-clad persons, as likely to prove a protector by no means contemptible in severe weather.

The quantity of paper now issued from numerous newspaper offices in a single week amounts to many tons in weight, and supposing sheet were added to sheet would reach thousands of miles in length. There are said to be many more paper-mills in the United States than in the British Isles; and the exports of paper from that country have we are assured greatly increased. In the international paper Exhibition of Paris, five hundred and thirty-five firms, including most of the leading houses in Germany, Austria, England, France, Belgium, Holland, Denmark, Sweden, Russia, Italy, Switzerland, and the United States, contributed. Besides every variety of writing and printing paper, there were special departments for paper-hangings, paper-blinds, and paper for building purposes, the general applicability of the article being also demonstrated by a paper-house erected in the court-yard with tables, chairs, chandeliers, and stoves of the same material. No part of the gallery of machines in the late Paris Exhibition was more patronised than that in the French section, where old rags were converted into pulp, dried, pressed in plates, and then wound round a bobbin as paper. The English and French display of white and coloured paper was excellent in point of solidity, equality of pulp, tenacity, and grain; and the English cream-laid was thought to be unrivalled. The French show of fantastic letter-paper was very fine; and the American paper was remarkable for its suppleness, resistance, and brilliancy. The silky paper of Japan too, so much in repute as exhibited in envelopes, was considered to be worthy of any paper-factory. Those curious people the Japanese do wonders with paper in the way of toys, lacquer-ware, and such articles, for example, as the imitation of stamped and embossed leather. The originality, colouring, and design exhibited in their wall-papers are

also worthy of all praise. In short, to touch on the numberless purposes to which paper has already been applied would greatly exceed the limits of the present article; but a very important future may be augured for this useful material from the examples here referred to.

A SUMMER-DAY REVERIE.

JUNE's blooming flowers and fragrance sweet,
Forth to the woods beguile our feet,
With unresisted spell;
Fond memories lure us to the spot
Where grows the blue Forget-me-not,
The flower we love so well.

Bright flower! to love and friendship dear;
Thy name falls softly on our ear,
With sweetness ever new;
Wafts back our thoughts on Fancy's wing
To sunny memories that cling
Around thy petals blue.

Unmarked the moments as they flow;
When seen in light of long ago,
How precious in our eyes!
Our yesterdays, too fair to last,
To-day, when numbered with the past,
Surpassing bright shall rise.

Why should we thus regretful sigh
For sunny pleasures long gone by,
And present joys forget?
To-day, for us the sunbeams fall,
And blooming flowers our hearts enthral,
In dewy fragrance set.

And dearer, sweeter joys are ours
Than sunlit skies or dewy flowers
Could e'er to us impart;
For us the wondrous world of Thought
Rare gems from every clime has brought,
Enriching mind and heart.

For us to-day, in golden store,
Nature and Art their treasures pour,
And love-sweet offerings bring;
Ah! whisper not of Time's decay;
Though all of earth must pass away,
Faith lifts her drooping wing.

Not in the sunny Past our rest,
Nor present joys shall end our quest
For full and perfect bliss;
Revealed alone to Faith's glad sight
Where time nor change our hopes can blight,
A fairer world than this!

EFFIE.

GALASHIELS, June 6, 1879.

[The preceding lines are the production of a Scottish 'mill-girl'; and we have much pleasure in giving them the publicity which they merit.—Ed.]

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